

## SHORT COMMUNICATION

**Hoverfly (Syrphidae) records from North Uist and the Monach Islands, Scotland—July 1999**—North Uist (57°35' N, 7°15' W), surface area of 341 km<sup>2</sup>, and the five Monach Islands (57°30' N, 7°40' W), total area of 3.5 km<sup>2</sup>, are flat and largely treeless islands that lie in the Atlantic Ocean off the west coast of Scotland. Together with the other Outer Hebrides, these islands are relatively 'unexplored' for hoverflies (Whiteley, 1994; Stubbs & Falk, 1993). During a week of uncharacteristically hot and dry weather in North Uist (24–30.vii.1999) and a visit to Ceann Ear, the largest of the Monach Islands, on 31.vii.1999, we observed the following sixteen hoverfly species on North Uist, one of which, *Platycheirus manicatus*, occurred also on the Monach Islands.

The low hoverfly abundance and diversity we observed probably reflects the relatively small size and geographical location of the islands, and the region's usual wet and windy weather conditions. However, collecting was not exhaustive or systematic, and concentrated largely on the northern half of North Uist. The greatest abundance of species was observed in the sand dunes and flower-rich machair at Solas, Newton, Balranald and Clachan Shanda. In the last of these locations, two male corncrakes (*Crex crex* (L.)) were calling. Unless otherwise stated, all the species listed below were seen in these habitat types. In addition, on passing through Skye to reach North Uist, we found *Eristalis pertinax* (Scop.) on a roadside verge at Broadford.

*Melanostoma mellinum* (L.) and *Melanostoma scalare* (Fab.): both *Melanostoma* species were found only in *Eriophorum vaginatum*-rich moorland near Weaver's Point, Lochmaddy. *Platycheirus albimanus* (Fab.): machair on North Uist and present also on a roadside verge at Broadford, Skye. *Platycheirus clypeatus* (Meigen); *Platycheirus manicatus* (Meigen): common on North Uist and the only species observed from Ceann Ear (Monach Islands), where it was widespread in the machair. *Metasyrphus corollae* (Fab.); *Sphaerophoria* sp.?: females only found within *Eriophorum vaginatum*-rich moorland near Weaver's Point, Lochmaddy. *Syrphus vitripennis* Meigen; *Cheilosia illustrata* (Harris); *Cheilosia latifrons* (Zett.); *Rhingia campestris* Meigen; *Lejogaster metallina* (Fab.); *Eristalis abusivus* Collin; *Eristalis intricarius* (L.); *Helophilus pendulus* (L.); *Sericonomyia silentis* (Harris): in *Eriophorum vaginatum*-rich moorland near Weaver's Point, Lochmaddy and boggy moorland at Newton, as well as hill-topping on Ben Mor c. 190 m above sea level. However, the *S. silentis* specimens collected in North Uist had white-yellow abdominal bars (tergites 2–4) which were more similar to those of *Sericonomyia lappoua* (L.) as illustrated in Stubbs & Falk (1993, p. 107; plate 8), and *S. lappoua* specimens in the collection of the Natural History Museum, London. The scutellum in *S. silentis* (North Uist specimens) is almost black, while in *S. lappoua* (museum specimens) it is reddish. This may be a more reliable aid to identification than the colour of the tergite bars.

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## REFERENCES

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